Chapter 7

Initial Start-Up

Don't make a half-hearted attempt at starting your kanban. Look at these three items to make sure you have all your bases covered before starting:

1. Confirm that design is implemented
2. Confirm that training is complete
3. Check the inventories

Once you are satisfied with the findings of the above items, then it is time to start the kanban. If you are not satisfied with your findings, develop a plan to make the necessary corrections to get ready for start-up.

Also, as you perform your last minute checks and dry run, look at the readiness of the participants. If they are ready to start the kanban and no significant issues exist, then start the kanban.

Remember, nothing is ever perfect. Sometimes we can rationalize ourselves into inaction for an eternity by looking at all the little flaws. Remember your role as a coach and mentor, and do not let your own fears keep you and the team from implementing the kanban.

Readiness Checklist

Use the following brief readiness checklist to determine whether you're ready to start up the kanban. Once you have satisfactorily completed the items on the list, perform the inventory analysis in the next section.

- ☐ Are the kanban rules finalized and coordinated?

- Are all the kanban signals setup (boards mounted, stands fabricated, etc.)?
- Are the kanban rules posted?
- Have all the required material staging changes been completed?
- Are the material flow signs in place?
- Has all the training been completed or at least scheduled?
- Have all concerns about the readiness of the operators been answered?
- Has a dry run been successfully completed?

Performing the Inventory Analysis

Once you have completed the readiness checklist, your final step is to assess the inventory. To develop the inventory assessment:

1. Conduct a physical count of the all the proposed kanban part numbers
2. Compare the inventory to the kanban quantities to determine whether you're at red, yellow, or green levels for the various production parts
3. Determine whether the kanban as designed would operate properly at the current inventory levels

To complete the step 3 action of determining whether the kanban will operate properly, look at the interval demand versus your current status. Your goal will be to keep all part numbers in the green or yellow areas and not stock out on any parts while following the signals. Complete the form in Figure WB 7-1 to determine your current inventory position. As a rule of thumb, you should be ready to start the kanban when none of the parts are at the red level and fewer

than 50 percent of the parts are in the yellow area. If you cannot meet this inventory level, then create a schedule to achieve this inventory position.

Figure WB 7-1

Part Name	Part Number	On Hand Quantity	Current Inventory Position (R, Y, or G)	Comments